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Hawaiian Annexation.

SPEECH
OF
HON. ROBERT R. HITT,
OF ILLINOIS,
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Saturday, June 11, 1898.

The House having under consideration the joint resolution (H. Res. 259) to provide for annexing the Hawaiian Islands to the United States—

Mr. HITT said:

Mr. SPEAKER: The measure which is now before the House for the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands is substantially the same as a treaty negotiated last year, which is here put into the form of a joint resolution. The treaty was duly ratified by the Senate of the Republic of Hawaii. We therefore know that we are acting with the cordial assent of the Government of the country proposed to be annexed. That treaty was preceded by another, negotiated by President Harrison five years ago between the two countries, providing for the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands to the United States, which treaty was duly ratified by the Government of Hawaii and would probably have been ratified by our Senate had it not been withdrawn by reason of a change of the occupant of our Executive office.

This is not a novel question at all. It is not an emergency proposition sprung upon us suddenly. It is not a case of greed for territory and overweening influence brought to bear by a great and powerful Government upon one of the smallest in the world to constrain it to give up its independent existence and be absorbed by the other under the form of a legal proceeding. There is no oppression on our side, there is no unwillingness on the other side. The whole proceeding is with the cordial assent of the duly constituted authorities of the Hawaiian Republic, and in accordance with the terms of the constitution of that Republic.

It is in pursuance of a policy long discussed and well known there and to our people here and to all the world. It is a result often contemplated by the successive governments of those islands for fifty years, because the circumstances surrounding the little nation in all the changes in its history have plainly made this a foregone conclusion. So slender, so tottering a political existence in the midst of the mighty political powers of the world had a precarious tenure of life. It was a continual temptation to them—an all important possession of a weak power. It has often been threatened. Several times it has been seized and occupied by a passing commander of a frigate—by a French captain in 1829, by a British commander in 1843, again by the French in 1849.

Conscious of its feeble ability to maintain independence among the nations, the subject of union with our country has been contemplated long. One of the kings of Hawaii executed a deed of

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Mr. W. A. Smith

cession to the United States in 1851. Another of the kings prepared a draft of a treaty of annexation to the United States in 1854, but before it was executed he died. As I have said, treaties of annexation to the United States have twice been negotiated with this Government within the last five years. It is the natural result of events and causes long operating and now concluding with mutual, cordial consent.

There is nothing that can impute to us, though this is so great and mighty a nation, any purpose of exercising undue pressure, as has ordinarily been the case in European history where a powerful government has taken possession of, absorbed, and extinguished a smaller. The only question we have to consider, when this little commonwealth with open hands offers itself to us, is whether we would be better off by taking this step; whether it would be advantageous to us to accept these islands; whether they are worth owning; whether their possession is of any value to us or not.

ARE THE ISLANDS WORTH ANNEXING?

That is a simple question and ought to be easily answered. Other nations have long since expressed their opinion of the value of the islands in many ways. Though it is a very small nationality, a very small extent of the earth's surface, not equal in people to a Congressional district represented on this floor, yet nineteen nations continually maintain representatives at Honolulu to watch their interests. We keep there to-day an envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. Why? Not because they are fertile and beautiful islands, not because there are a little over a hundred thousand people there. No; it is because of the supreme importance and value of the islands on account of their position.

They sit facing our western coast—that long stretch confronting the great Pacific Ocean, the most extensive body of water in the world, stretching away for six, seven, eight thousand miles—and they are the nearest point to our coast, and far, very far, removed from any other point in that vast sea. They are 2,000 miles away from us. That seems a very considerable distance, but the immense stretch beyond them to the other portions of the earth is so much greater that they seem comparatively near and are a part of our own system.

With the great change in the construction of fighting ships, all of which are now moved by steam, coal has become an essential of maritime war, as much so as powder or guns, and across that wide ocean any vessel of war coming to attack the United States must stop for coal and supplies at the Hawaiian Islands before it can attack us. No ship can be constructed, no battle ship exists in the world, which can make the trip from the other side of that wide sea to our shores, conduct any operation of hostility against us, and ever get back unless it has its supply of coal renewed.

Mr. KELLEY. Will the gentleman permit an interruption? I simply want to call the gentleman's attention to the map.

Mr. HITT. We are all pretty familiar with the map—the remarkable position of these islands and the routes that ships are accustomed to follow. I do not suppose that my personal opinion is worth more than that of the average of mankind who are not specially qualified as commanders and mariners, nor that any member of the House is so presumptuous as to consider his own personal opinion itself an important fact.

But we have on this critical and central question, which is not one of common judgment, the opinions of the most distinguished, specially expert, and able men of the age, the greatest commanders of our armies and our fleets who are living. It is an impressive and convincing fact that all have given the same opinion. There has been no divergence. Everyone has stated that the possession of those islands was to us of great importance, many of them say indispensable; that it will diminish, not increase, the necessity for naval force, economize ships of war and not require more; that in the possession of an enemy, if we shall so foolishly and unwisely act as to refuse annexation and permit them to pass into the hands of an enemy, they will furnish a secure base for active operations to harass and destroy the cities of our western coast; that in our possession, duly fortified, those islands will paralyze any fleet, however strong, however superior to our own naval force in the Pacific, before it can attack our coast.

I accept the opinion of men like Admiral Walker and Captain Mahan and General Schofield, Admiral Belknap, General Alexander, and Admiral Dupont and Chief Engineer Melville. It is a long list of great sailors and soldiers, distinguished strategists and authorities. The striking fact is that there is no dissent among them. These men, who are authorities, have all concurred as to the great importance of the islands. On one of the islands is Pearl Harbor, now unimproved, a possible stronghold and a refuge for a fleet, which, fortified by the expenditure of half a million dollars and garrisoned and aided by the militia of the island and its resources, can be made impregnable to any naval force, however large.

I speak of a naval force. To capture it there must be a land force also. The possession of all the islands was stated by these able men, who were before the committee, to be essential, as they would furnish a valuable militia to promptly cooperate with a garrison of one or two regiments of artillery until, in the short distance from our shore, we could reenforce them with abundant military strength to repel the assault of the disembarking troops, who must come many thousands of miles farther than our own.

This is not my mere assertion or opinion on so grave and technical a question. I am merely giving some of the leading points made by those whose names command the respect of the military and naval professions throughout the world and who have said that the possession not only of Pearl Harbor but of all that little group of islands is to us a necessity. I will give some expressions used by these distinguished authorities. I might give many more.

Captain Mahan, the most distinguished writer and authority of our time on the history of sea power, says:

It is obvious that if we do not hold the islands ourselves, we can not expect the neutrals in the war to prevent the other belligerent from occupying them; nor can the inhabitants themselves prevent such occupation. The commercial value is not great enough to provoke neutral interposition. In short, in war we should need a larger Navy to defend the Pacific coast, because we should have not only to defend our own coast, but to prevent, by naval force, an enemy from occupying the islands; whereas, if we preoccupied them, fortifications could preserve them to us.

In my opinion it is not practicable for any trans-Pacific country to invade our Pacific coast without occupying Hawaii as a base.

General Schofield, who spent three months on the islands and made a careful survey of Pearl River Harbor, stated to our committee:

The most important feature of all is that it economizes the naval force rather than increases it. It is capable of absolute defense by shore batteries;

so that a naval fleet, after going there and replenishing its supplies and making what repairs are needed, can go away and leave the harbor perfectly safe under the protection of the army. Then arises at once the question why this harbor will be of consequence to the United States. It has not been easy to make that perfectly clear to the minds of men who have not made such subjects the study of a lifetime till now; but the conditions of the present war, it seems to me, ought to make it clear to everybody.

At this moment the Government is fitting out quite a large fleet of steamers at San Francisco to carry large detachments of troops and military supplies of all kinds to the Philippine Islands. Honolulu is almost in the direct route. That fleet, of course, will want very much to recoal at Honolulu, thus saving that amount of freight and tonnage for essential stores to be carried with it. Otherwise they would have to carry coal enough to carry them all the way from San Francisco to Manila and that would occupy a large amount of the carrying capacity of the fleet, and if they recoal at Honolulu all that will be saved. More than that, a fleet is liable at any time to meet with stress of weather, or perhaps a heavy storm, and there might be an accident to the machinery which will make it necessary to put into the nearest port possible for repairs and additional supplies. By the time it reaches there its coal supply may be well-nigh exhausted; it then has to replenish its coal supply to carry it to whatever port it could reach.

If I am not misinformed in regard to the laws of neutrality, the supply of coal that can be taken on board at neutral ports is only sufficient to bring it back to the nearest home port, and not enough to carry it across the ocean, so that if we had to regard Honolulu as a neutral port, we could only load up coal enough to bring us back to San Francisco. Now, let us suppose, on the other hand, that the Spanish navy in the Pacific as well as in the Atlantic, or both, were a little stronger than ours instead of being somewhat weaker. The first thing they would do would be to go and take possession of the Sandwich Islands and make them the base of naval operations against the Pacific coast.

You have only to consider the state of mind which exists all along the Atlantic coast under the erroneous apprehension that the Spanish fleet might possibly assail our coast to see what would be the case if the Spanish fleet were a good deal stronger than ours and took possession of Honolulu and made it a base of operations in attacking the points on the Pacific coast. We would be absolutely powerless, because we would have no fleet there to dispute the possession of the Sandwich Islands, whereas, if we held that place and fortified it so that a foreign navy could not take it, it could not operate against the Pacific coast at all, for it could not bring coal enough across the Pacific Ocean to sustain an attack on the Pacific coast.

It happens that in this war we have picked out the only nation in the world that is a little weaker than ourselves. The Spanish fleet on the Asiatic station was the only one of all the fleets we could have overcome as we did. Of course that can not again happen, for we will not be able to pick up so weak an enemy next time. We are liable at any time to get into a war with a nation which has a more powerful fleet than ours, and it is of vital importance, therefore, if we can, to hold the point from which they can conduct operations against our Pacific coast. Especially is that true until the Nicaragua Canal is finished, because we can not send a fleet from the Atlantic to the Pacific. We can not send them around Cape Horn and repel an attack there. If we had the canal finished, we would be much better off in that respect; but even then we would want the possession of a base very much.

The same eminent and experienced soldier, when asked whether it would be sufficient to have Pearl Harbor without the islands, said we ought to have the islands to hold the harbor; that if left free and neutral complications would arise with foreign nations, who would take advantage of a weak little Republic with claims for damages enforced by war ships, as is frequently seen. If annexed, we would settle any dispute with a foreign nation; that we would be much stronger if we owned the islands as part of our territory, and would then also have the resources of the islands, which are so fertile, for military supplies; that if we do not have the political control they may become Japanese; and we would be surrounded by a hostile people.

Admiral Walker, who has had long experience in the waters of the Hawaiian Islands, emphatically confirmed the views of General Schofield, especially that it would cost far less to protect the Pacific coast with the Hawaiian Islands than without them; that

it would be taking a point of advantage instead of giving it to your enemy.

Admiral Dupont, in a report made as long ago as 1851, expressed his view in these words:

It is impossible to estimate too highly the value and importance of the Sandwich Islands, whether in a commercial or military point of view. Should circumstances ever place them in our hands, they would prove the most important acquisition we could make in the whole Pacific Ocean—an acquisition intimately connected with our commercial and naval supremacy in those seas.

THE TEACHING OF RECENT EVENTS.

For a war of defense the Hawaiian Islands are to us inestimably important, most essential, and in this light they have been most often discussed. The discussion in past years has attracted little public attention, because our people, until they were lately awakened by the war and the movement to reenforce Dewey, have not thought much about the exposed situation of our western coast in case of war with a really great power or the necessity of possessing these islands confronting our Pacific coast.

We learn fast in war time. Not long ago, when the air was filled with rumors of Spanish war ships coming to our eastern and northeastern coast, many members here, and I was one of them, received telegrams from the coast cities to use their influence to have an adequate naval force sent to the threatened coast on the northeast. Now we have fleets and strong land forces and coast defenses on the east. We have comparatively slender preparations on the west coast. There is not anywhere on the east a group of islands of such cardinal and unique importance as the Sandwich Islands—not even the Bermudas.

Not only in defensive war but in war of any kind they are necessary to us. In the events of the hour we have an illustration of the importance and the military necessity of possessing those islands. The present war was begun for the declared purpose of expelling Spain from Cuba and liberating the struggling people of that island; but once involved in war, it is the duty of the President, who is Commander of the Army and Navy, to strike at Spain wherever he can effectively; and a great and successful blow was struck in Manila by gallant Admiral Dewey and his fleet. [Applause.]

There is no one in our country so recreant to his duty as an American that he would refuse to support the President in succoring Dewey after his magnificent victory, lying in Manila Bay, holding in control the Spanish power there, but unable to land for want of reinforcements and surrounded by millions of Spanish subjects. Yet it is not possible to send support to Dewey to-day without taking on coal and supplies at Honolulu in the Hawaiian Islands—a neutral power.

By the law of nations, that power is bound to refuse to allow ships engaged in war to take on supplies or stay in port over twenty-four hours and is liable for all damages to Spanish interests caused by allowing the rules of neutrality in war to be violated by us. We are strong; Hawaii is weak. We absolutely must use that port, and do use it.

If the rights and duties of neutrality were enforced by the Hawaiian Government, and the *Monadnock* and the *Monterey*, which are leaving San Francisco for Manila, were compelled to go through with such coal as they could carry, they could not get half way before their fires would go out and they would lie weltering, help-

less, dead, like derelicts, in the Pacific. In order to reach the Philippine Islands it is a necessity that the transports, battle ships, and other vessels of the fleet shall take on supplies at Honolulu, and they are doing it.

IS OUR PRESENT POSITION HONORABLE?

There is a feature connected with this that is humiliating to an American who loves the consistent dignity and honor of his country and desires to have it command the respect of the world. Within the last two weeks I have heard, in conversation among members of this House, expressions of great impatience at the conduct of European powers, upon newspaper rumor that Spanish ships of war had been permitted to recalc in one French island, that a Spanish ship of war had been allowed to stay thirty-six hours in a port of another island belonging to France, that supplies had been derived by Spain from Germany, even in this time of war. The discontent expressed throughout our country in the press was so wide, the criticism so sharp, that M. Hanotaux, the French minister of foreign affairs, in order to preserve and promote amicable relations and kindly sentiments, made a public statement disposing of all these disquieting rumors, and declaring that France loyally and faithfully observes and will observe her obligations as a neutral toward both belligerents everywhere.

While we have been giving notice to France, Germany, and Great Britain that war was existing and calling their attention to their duty as neutral powers, in order that they might issue neutrality proclamations, while on the east we respectfully approached German William, who commands a hundred legions, with long formal notices of our belligerency, trusting that he would adhere to the rules of neutrality, we came on the west to the little Republic of Hawaii, and without a word of courtesy or request took possession of all we cared to take, in utter contempt of her neutrality, of our duties as a belligerent nation dealing with a neutral country, and in disregard of the heavy liabilities we forced upon Hawaii.

We had even piled up 10,000 tons of coal in Honolulu Harbor for our Navy, a considerable part of it before the declaration of war. Yesterday came the news that the *Charleston*, one of our battle ships, entered the harbor of Honolulu without so much as saying "by your leave," to stay there as long as she will. All the other ships in the fleet going over to our Asiatic squadron do the same thing. We have the superior physical force to do this, but we are not in a position to do it with impunity in the face of the public opinion of the world, if we desire to command the respect of mankind and our own self-respect.

THE THREE RULES GOVERNING NEUTRALITY.

What is the law that governs the conduct of a neutral nation and its liability? When the treaty of Washington was negotiated in this city in 1871, the United States presented and proposed three general rules which should be observed by a neutral nation and determine its liability. The English refused to assent to them in the language first proposed, and after long debate and modification at last those rules were put in due form, accepted, and solemnly placed in that famous treaty. Both nations agreed to observe and be bound by them in future, and to invite the adherence and cooperation of all other nations.

You have recently seen the spirit and substance of those rules

reflected in the proclamations of neutrality issued by many nations. Those famous rules sprang from our suggestion. Let me read their words, and then see the liability to which we put a neutral nation which, willingly or unwillingly, must submit to what we are doing to-day at Honolulu, and notice especially the second rule which we then pressed and now disregard, and under which Hawaii is liable to Spain. By the sixth article of the treaty of Washington of 1871 a neutral is bound—

First, to use due diligence to prevent the fitting out, arming, or equipping within its jurisdiction of any vessel which it has reasonable ground to believe is intended to cruise or carry on war against a power with which it is at peace, and also to use like diligence to prevent the departure from its jurisdiction of any vessel intended to cruise or carry on war as above, such vessel having been specially adapted, in whole or in part, within such jurisdiction to warlike use.

Secondly, not to permit or suffer either belligerent to make use of its ports or waters as the base of naval operations against the other or for the purpose of renewal or augmentation of military supplies or arms or the recruitment of men.

Thirdly, to exercise due diligence in its own ports and waters, and as to all persons within its jurisdiction, to prevent any violation of the foregoing obligation and duty.

That is the law of nations as we pressed it unsparingly, and under which we collected \$15,500,000 from Great Britain for depredations committed on our interests by ships that had been coaled or harbored in British ports in violation of that law. So for every damage done to Spanish interests by an American war ship which has been supplied, repaired, or coaled in the Sandwich islands that Government, the property of the people of those islands, is liable to pay to Spain the full amount of loss.

When this war is over and peace is declared, if the gentlemen opposed to this resolution prevail and prevent annexation and continue Hawaii's independent existence, if the liabilities of the islands for the claims of Spain against the Republic of Hawaii should be referred to arbitration, and the President of the United States should be one of the arbitrators, he would have to vote to compel them to pay the last cent, no matter how vast might be the burden of taxation it would impose on that little people.

PRESSURE NOW BY FOREIGN POWERS.

Now, this is not a vague speculation. It is not merely hypothetical. The property owners in the island are alarmed. The foreign powers represented there are active. I hold in my hand a dispatch from our minister at Honolulu of May 10, a part of which I can not with propriety read, and have not authority to do so; but I will read this part:

The strongest influence has been brought to bear upon the Government urging it to proclaim neutrality, give notice to the *Bennington* to leave port, and invite the cooperation of other powers to protect the neutrality of the group.

He proceeds to state that this is the opinion of the diplomatic corps here, and not only them, but the foreign merchants also, "and I regret to say many who heretofore have been classed as American sympathizers and urgent annexationists." Do you wonder at them? With the prospect of such trouble and taxation amounting to confiscation, fearing that the United States, with the powerful influences at work in Washington hostile to Hawaii, may not come to their rescue, when we have not given a hint, much less a pledge, to stand between the little Republic and danger, do you wonder that merchants and all property owners are disquieted?

But without any words from us or any assurance from our Government, notwithstanding the pressure to which it has been sub-

jected, the brave little Hawaiian Government, loving America better than Spain and confident in the justice of the great American people as a child trusts its father, remains unchanged in its purpose. [Applause.]

Are you not as Americans proud of that little colony, the only true American colony, the only spot on earth beyond our boundaries in the wide world where our country is preferred above all others? [Renewed applause.] That steadfast body of men, pressed and menaced by the influence of so many empires and kingdoms, threatening them with the danger that would follow if they permitted the American flag to stay in their harbor, remained constant in their devotion to the colors they loved and the people they always trusted. They are the same men who, when threatened with an unscrupulous, corrupt, and arbitrary monarchy, which had violated the constitution, besieged the King in his palace and shook his throne, overcame his army, and compelled him to swear observance of the constitution which he had violated.

The same resolute men drove a worthless Queen from the throne when she again attempted to overthrow the constitution and destroy the guaranties of property—the woman who, when she talked with Minister Willis of restoration, wished one condition, that she might behead the Americans. I have no apology to make for men sprung from our blood who have borne themselves with such enlightenment, courage, and energy as these men have done [applause], whose only fault is that they love our flag more than their own. They love the flag under which many of them once fought. Some of them fought under another, the bonnie blue flag, during our great war; but at heart brave Americans all, they have united there to sustain the cause of the United States in this war with Spain, animated by a love of American institutions and love of liberty. They are men who can not be intimidated or turned aside from their purpose, men who have successfully resisted every influence to bring them under the control of other foreign governments or any domestic tyranny.

OUR NATIONAL HONOR IN QUESTION.

This is a very practical and important question with them, and it is important to us. I said we had only the question of interest to consider here to-day, whether it would be advantageous to us to annex. Have we not also a high question of national honor?

While we are demanding the observance of neutrality by other nations, we disregard it ourselves. We are compelled to it by military necessity. That is the fact. What is the honorable solution? Annex them and end it all. In a war of defense, as I have stated, these islands are to us indispensable. We find, too, that in this contest with Spain, which has taken the form of offensive war, as we are attacking them in the Orient, we are compelled to use them in order to support Dewey.

DANGER OF DELAY.

Can we put this question off indefinitely? Can we play with our duty under the law of nations, or shall we try to turn about and treat them sincerely as neutral? We know that the actual real neutrality of the islands would to-day work us a great injury. The minority propose that we should guarantee the independence of the islands, which, of course, perpetuates their neutrality and puts us in a position that we can not endure.

Mr. JOHNSON of Indiana. I hope the gentleman will not turn

too much to one side. If he turns too short to the right, gentlemen can not hear him on that side, and if he turns too sharp to the left we can not hear him on this; and we all want to hear the gentleman.

Mr. HITT. I appreciate the gentleman's suggestion, as it implies that my remarks have his attention.

We can not afford to let them alone. We must possess and fortify and hold and use them or leave them to their fate. The other side of the House propose to guarantee their independence by a declaration of Congress. That is a mere matter of words, and when war arises words are brushed aside and armies and navies decide; and we should prepare not by declarations, but by taking the islands. Besides, independence implies all the duties and rights of neutrality. The gentlemen would put our Government in the dishonorable position of declaring and guaranteeing Hawaiian independence as a neutral nation at the very moment when we are disregarding their neutrality and independence.

THEIR FUTURE THREATENED.

They can not remain as they are. The future is threatening. Sagacious statesmen have long foreseen it.

Mr. Willis, whom so many old members will recollect as a valuable member of this House, was sent to these islands by Mr. Cleveland to demand the overthrow of the republican government. We all recollect his dispatches. Many of us had the advantage of conversation with him when he returned to this country.

RIISING POWER OF JAPAN IN HAWAII.

In one of those dispatches he mentioned, incidentally, what he also said here in conversation, that far the most threatening fact in the condition of the islands was the rapid growth of the Japanese element, and the purpose for which it was being sent there. There are over 24,000 Japanese on the island. They are mostly men, grown men; 19,000 of them are men.

If they voted, it would be converted into a Japanese commonwealth immediately. This is not a light thing.

A BIT OF HISTORY.

Over twelve years ago the planters, desirous of having other labor to diversify their Chinese and Portuguese labor, tried to have an additional supply from Japan. An arrangement was made, which was put into a convention in 1886, permitting the Japanese Immigration Company to send over Japanese laborers upon due authorization from the Hawaiian Government. These Japanese came at first in small numbers; but pretty soon they began to come faster, and the Japanese Government, which is directed by able statesmen, anxious to take advantage of all opportunities, made a demand that these Japanese subjects going there should have the same rights as the natives.

A JAPANESE FUTURE NOW PLAINLY THREATENED THEM.

That startled the Hawaiian Government. That was what Mr. Willis referred to when we met him here in conversation. The demand was ingeniously presented and energetically sustained. It might seem surprising that such a demand should be made. It was based upon an old treaty made by Japan in 1873 with one of the kings, which it was claimed granted to all Japanese forever the rights of the most favored nation. In truth, that treaty related only to traders and their privileges in the ports, and was so meant. It gave to Japanese liberty to come with ships and cargoes to ports where trade with other nations was permitted, where

they might hire houses and warehouses and trade, enjoying the same privileges as were granted to other nations.

However, it did not amount to anything without finding a "favored nation." They found an old treaty, made way back in 1863, by one of the native kings with Spain, drawn apparently in very liberal terms, and meant to enable the traders to come and trade in the ports, which provided that they should "enjoy the same rights and privileges which are granted to natives."

So, by carrying over these privileges given to Spanish traders as such by a Kanaka king thirty-five years ago, and under which Spain had never thought of claiming the voting franchise, by distributing them to the Japanese traders in 1873 they spread them out in their demand over the whole Japanese population, laborers and all. That population was being poured in at a tremendous pace, sometimes 1,000 a week, and they would have soon overwhelmed everything on the island by sheer numbers. The Hawaiian Republic made its utmost endeavors to struggle against this flood. They protested, they denied any such interpretation of a treaty which concerned not laborers, but merely traders, such as came on trading voyages in that old time.

They demanded that only those should land who had permits by the convention of 1886. They adopted a police restriction against paupers, such as all governments have a right to make. The police regulation required every one who came to have \$50. The immigration company in Japan was up to the exigency. They sent them still without permits and met the pauper restriction by a curious device. As the coolie left the vessel to go off, he was handed \$50, which he took in one hand, and after he passed the inspector he handed it back to the Japanese agent; and so they pretended to comply with the literal terms of the restriction.

The Hawaiian Government would not submit to such proceedings. They arrested those without permits or bona fide money and turned back hundreds of them—over 1,100. The Japanese Government were in dead earnest by this time. The game was in sight. If they could once get these men in sufficient numbers there with the voting power, they would soon turn the whole Government into a Japanese commonwealth, and then they would quickly end the reciprocity treaty with the United States and all our special rights to Pearl Harbor or anything else. Japan sent a ship of war, which might well alarm them, and a high official with it, who demanded that the permit should not be required, and that they should be free to come in as voluntary immigrants without stint; that Hawaii had no right to inquire into the bona fide character of the fifty-dollar transaction, and presented a great claim for indemnity to those turned back.

The little Republic held out stoutly and asked for arbitration. Japan said, "We will arbitrate; we will soon let you know exactly what we will do;" and the next month they said they would arbitrate all questions between the two countries except as to the bona fide character of the fifty-dollar transaction and the permit for immigration, nor would they arbitrate the treaty-construction question. In short, they were willing to refer to arbitration everything except the questions to be arbitrated. The horizon looked dark for Hawaii.

But at this point the little Republic made a treaty of annexation with the United States, and Japan learned that they could not discuss the matter further with them, because they had made a treaty of annexation with the United States, which, by its very nature, would extinguish all other treaties. Even that did not stop

Japan, and she made an earnest protest to the United States against the treaty of annexation. Our Government answered promptly that Japan was not concerned in it; that we could deal only with the Hawaiian Republic, and refused to consider the protest, and this in such terms that Japan formally withdrew it. But she has not withdrawn these claims, she has not withdrawn the demand against the Hawaiian Government of the right to pour in Japanese without permit, or the right to demand for all Japanese any privileges or rights of the natives, which would include the right to vote and hold office.

Now, suppose we reject this offer of the Hawaiian Republic to join our country and become part of us. They are then left an independent government, with no hope of joining us, and become responsible for their own international relations and must answer to Japan. If Japan should succeed in her contention as to the old treaty rights, her people will vote and soon change the administration of affairs there. They would elect their own officials and government in Hawaii.

RECIPROCITY AND PEARL HARBOR RIGHTS THREATENED.

They could at once attack the reciprocity treaty with the United States. By the terms of that treaty either party may terminate it on twelve months' notice. Pearl Harbor is therein granted to us; that is, we have a right to enter the harbor to improve it and use it as a coaling and naval station.

We have never done any of these things. The entrance has not even been opened. No ship of ours has gone in there. Nothing whatever has been done in that direction. I tried vainly to have an appropriation made by Congress over a year ago to have the harbor opened and improved and our flag raised, in order to strengthen our title by possession, so that when the question of our tenure should come up we might have that point in our favor—an important point in any contention which might arise under international law. But since we have done nothing the case stands thus: The Pearl Harbor grant to us in the reciprocity treaty was in a new article, Article II, added when the treaty was renewed in 1887. After that amendment had been put on in the Senate, and before exchange of ratifications of the renewed reciprocity treaty thus modified, there was an exchange of official notes between Minister Carter, of the Hawaiian Islands, and Mr. Bayard, Secretary of State of the United States.

Mr. Carter stated that they wanted it distinctly understood that in assenting to the Senate provision in a reciprocity treaty granting to the United States the use of Pearl Harbor as a coaling station they did not propose any derogation of the sovereignty or jurisdiction of the Hawaiian Islands or any cession of territory whatever; that it was to be regarded as a privilege granted as compensation for the advantages they obtained by reciprocity, and that with the cessation of reciprocity the Pearl Harbor grant would cease.

Mr. Bayard's words in reply, are conclusive. He said:

No ambiguity or obscurity in that amendment is observable; and I can discern therein no subtraction from Hawaiian sovereignty over the harbor to which it relates, nor any language importing a longer duration for the interpolated Article II than is provided for in Article I of the supplementary convention.

Article I provides that this arrangement may be abrogated on one year's notice. There is our tenure of Pearl River.

Mr. TAWNEY. Is it not a fact that under that grant the Gov-

ernment of the United States obtains absolutely nothing except the use of the water—that we obtain no land at all for the purpose of utilizing the harbor as a coaling station?

Mr. HITT. I will read the language of Article II:

His Majesty the King of the Hawaiian Islands grants to the Government of the United States the exclusive right to enter the harbor of Pearl River, in the Island of Oahu, and to establish and maintain there a coaling and repair station for the use of the vessels of the United States, and to that end the United States may improve the entrance to said harbor and do all other things needful to the purpose aforesaid.

As the honorable gentleman says, we get nothing in that grant but the use of the water.

Mr. Speaker, I have held the floor so much longer than I intended that I will hasten to conclude.

COMMERCIAL INTERESTS.

The commercial value of the islands, the great interests that are to be promoted or are to languish, dependent upon our possession of the islands, which are the crossing place of almost all the lines of steamers in that sea, have been often discussed. We have a very large trade there, over \$18,000,000 annually of late years, and increasing. Not only do we admit their unrefined sugar free to our country, but, under the reciprocity treaty, they admit our products free of duty, and last year we sold to them \$6,800,000 worth of goods.

Of course, if the islands are diverted to other control—if that treaty terminates—we will rapidly lose their trade. At present they purchase from us three-fourths of all their imports. We have a great shipping trade there, American ships carrying nearly all the trade of the island. Honolulu is the only port in the world where American shipping is so greatly in the ascendant as to outnumber that of all other countries put together. Of the seven trans-Pacific steamship lines, six make Honolulu a way station. Shall we let it pass into rival or hostile control?

Mr. GAINES. I understand from reliable sources that the population of that island is more or less afflicted with leprosy. Will the gentleman please let us know what are the facts on that point?

CHARACTER OF THE POPULATION—LEPROSY.

Mr. HITT. The population of the island, 109,000, is a mixed population. About half, or nearly half, are Asiatic—Chinese and Japanese. About twenty to twenty-five thousand are people of European or American origin—a good many Americans, a good many Germans, British, and a large number Portuguese and other nationalities. This Caucasian element is the strong intellectual and industrial force of the island. The Portuguese are people who have been there for some time. More than half of them were born on the island; were educated in the schools there, which are similar to the schools here, and those children speak English as an ordinary American child. There is little or no leprosy among them or any cleanly, highly civilized people anywhere. After annexation the Asiatics would rapidly disappear in numbers under the operation of our laws and under the penal code of the islands, which would send back Chinese laborers very soon.

The contract system would be terminated. The immigration from this country would no doubt increase. I have seen little reason to believe that there would be any difficulty whatever in regard to any maladies save among those Asiatic elements and the Kanakas. There is leprosy, brought to the islands, it is said, by the Chinese. I am not familiar with the facts, personally, never having visited the islands. There is a vague impression,

especially among Bible readers, who are very prevalent in this House [laughter], as to that word "leprosy" in descriptions of the islands, which is not correct as to the form of disease called leprosy as it exists in Hawaii, and which I have myself often seen in the Orient.

It is a malady that rarely affects people of the Caucasian race of the better class, who use an abundance of soap and water. It is not contagious in the ordinary sense. Why, I have seen children in the huts of lepers in Turkey, sons and daughters of lepers, 8 and 10 years of age, who were beautiful children, and who had never been away from the leper village. That is a common sight in the Orient. It is not the loathsome, running disease mentioned so often in the Bible. It seems to be a paralysis and withering of the ears, fingers, etc., and they drop away painlessly.

It is communicated by long association and intercourse, but it is not communicated like the smallpox, or yellow fever, or any of those rapidly contagious maladies. The present vigorous, well-organized, well-arranged government of the islands has segregated it at Mo'okai; and though the elements there for the spread of such maladies are very favorable, in that oriental population, and among those weak and diseased natives, yet it is a comparatively small detraction from the condition of the general population of the island, and it would probably never be found to affect us in this country. We have had it in a sporadic way in our country for a long time and it is controlled. There is a leper colony in Louisiana and one in Canada. I will leave that question to experts.

Mr. LOVE. I should like to ask the gentleman what number of American citizens there are in the island?

Mr. HITT. I do not think there are any American citizens except some travelers and sojourners. There are many people there of American origin, but they are Hawaiians, some of them sons and grandsons of men who went from the United States. But they are not American citizens, except partially, by a peculiar provision of their law, which allows men to retain a title to foreign citizenship. I think there are a good many of them; but what is ordinarily meant by strictly American citizens relates to people who travel or sojourn there from this country and go away. There are several thousands there of American origin, and who are very strongly American at heart.

Mr. WHEELER of Kentucky. I have listened with a great deal of interest to what the gentleman has said about this; but there is one phase of the question that I think the House would hear with a great deal of interest, and that is the result and effect of annexation, not upon the commercial or military welfare of this country, but as a departure from the established customs of our country. I should like to hear the gentleman upon that phase of the question.

NO NEW POLICY.

Mr. HITT. This measure does not launch us upon any new policy, as I tried to explain, but the importance of the question lies, first of all, in the necessity of possessing these islands for the defense of our western shore, the protection and promotion of our commercial interests, and the welfare and security of our own country generally. Mr. Blaine stated it very well in a dispatch where he said the Panama Canal connecting our two shores, facilitating their defense and communication, was a purely American question, and that the possession of the Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands, giving them strategic control of the North Pacific, was one of purely American policy.

In the whole of what I have said I have discussed this question solely as it affected our own country. The population there is so small that it can not be considered an element of much comparative importance. It is not one seven-hundredth part of our population at home. It is the importance of the group as a point, what military and naval men call a strategic point, that makes it of extreme importance and should make us prompt to seize upon the first opportunity to have rightful possession of the islands.

SUGAR COMPETITION.

Something is said about the danger to our beet-sugar interests in this country from the competition of Hawaiian cane sugar after annexation coming in free of duty. There may well be some persons connected with the sugar-refining interest who are hostile to annexation; but the producers of beet sugar or unrefined sugar have nothing to apprehend. The total available natural cane lands in the islands do not amount to four townships of our land. They could not supply a tenth of what we consume. Besides, annexation will make no difference to the farmer here, as the raw or unrefined sugar of the Hawaiian Islands now comes in as free of duty under the Hawaiian reciprocity treaty as it would after annexation, and the only man who is affected is the refiner, who is protected now by the tariff against refined Hawaiian sugar. Refined sugar does not come in free under the treaty, and if annexation comes the refined sugar will come in free, and of course the refiners are hostile to it.

Mr. RIDGELY. The chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs stated what is a very important matter in regard to the treaty existing between the Sandwich Islands and Japan. Under that treaty the Japanese Government claimed the right of citizenship for Japanese subjects who are now on the island, or who may hereafter go there under this treaty. Now, my question is, if we accept the islands under the present bill, will we have to accept those Japanese subjects under that treaty?

Mr. HITT. Not at all—not as citizens.

Mr. RIDGELY. And involve ourselves in that affair.

Mr. HITT. This action extinguishing the sovereignty of Hawaii and incorporating the islands in the United States would abrogate all her treaties. The only part that would survive would be claims arising or accruing prior to this time under former treaties. All treaties fall with the extinction of the existence of a nation. Their foreign affairs pass under our control.

POSSIBLE STATEHOOD.

Mr. CLARDY. The gentleman has very interestingly and very instructively explained various features of this question, but there is one point that I should like to know still further about, and that is this: Suppose these islands are received into the United States under this resolution, what does this Administration intend, or what do the people of the United States intend, to do with them? Will they be admitted as a State? It seems to me that is a very important question.

Mr. HITT. I am not a mind reader, and the Almighty alone can answer what is in men's minds.

Mr. CLARDY. The gentleman ought to have some idea of what the Government intends to do.

Mr. HITT. You will have to find that out from other sources. By the terms of this resolution all such questions will be determined by Congress, and Congress will and should do what the

American people want done. The President will have no power over the subject.

Mr. RIDGELY. Do the Japanese in Hawaii vote?

Mr. HITT. They do not vote now, and the disposition and mode of government of those islands and everything connected with them is, under the terms of the joint resolution, left in the control of Congress.

Mr. FLEMING. I should like to ask this question, which I think is a legitimate one: What is the personal opinion of the gentleman himself as to the status that the Hawaiian Islands ought to occupy in future developments of the country? I should like to know if the gentleman has any information on the subject.

Mr. HITT. It is nothing but the private opinion of one individual, and is of little value.

Mr. FLEMING. It would carry a great deal of weight, and it is a question that is troubling some of us as to the development that is to come in the future.

Mr. HITT. It is a development that relates to the future. Chief Justice Taney, in the Dred Scott decision, speaking of the constitutionality of the acquisition of territory, said that there was no power granted in the Constitution of the United States to acquire any territory in any way; that there was only a grant to Congress to admit States. A State is a civil political organization of people occupying territory or land previously possessed by the United States. That has been the fact as to all States admitted except Texas, which was acquired as a Territory or possession, and admitted as a State at the same time.

Judge Taney added that in the construction of the power to admit States it authorizes the acquisition of territory not fit for admission at the time, and the power to acquire territory for that purpose rests upon the same discretion, and is a question for the political department of the Government.

In truth, it is impossible to imagine a sovereign state without the power of increasing its boundaries. It enters into the very idea of sovereignty, and Chief Justice Fuller said in the Mormon Church case that the power to make acquisitions of territory by conquest, by treaty, or by cession is an incident of national sovereignty. Chief Justice Taney said in his supplemental remark, after his comments on the restricted grant in the Constitution to admit States, that territory that was acquired was always acquired with a theoretical view to ultimately being a State or a part of a State, a condition of statehood in some form at some time.

Mr. FLEMING. That is what I meant.

Mr. HITT. When we admitted those vast stretches of ice and rock in Alaska that border upon the Arctic Ocean it was with the theoretical view that some day, under some conditions, they might be a part of the United States as States, not merely as a landed possession or territory; but we have waited a generation, and we may wait a thousand years. There are gentlemen sitting all around me who represent districts in States made out of territory which we kept waiting the greater part of a century. How long was the region which is Montana a territorial possession? I do not know what will be the ultimate destiny of this little group of islands and their population, but we may imagine that, with the assent of California or Oregon or Washington, they may become a county or counties and a part of one of those States, and thus assume the quality of statehood. But this I give merely as a suggestion, and representing the opinion of nobody else, and I did not intend to bring it into the debate.

Mr. SIMS. I want to ask about the expense that it will be to this Government to maintain this territory.

Mr. HITT. That is a question no man can answer with precision. It is a well-managed little republic on a sound financial basis. There is a balance to credit now in the budget of the islands. They are not running in debt, but have a margin of surplus. I trust we can administer them as economically as that Government does. With the gentleman who has asked me the question and other gentlemen who will be here in Congress, I have confidence enough in their wisdom to feel sure that the affairs of a little added population, numbering but one seven-hundredth part of our own people, will be successfully cared for in our future legislation.

I have detained the House very long, and I hope that I have not failed to answer any question.

Mr. HENRY of Mississippi. If we take these islands and annex them, have we to pay anything in the way of debts?

Mr. HITT. Well, they have assets and liabilities, the assets being twice as great as the liabilities. We take both when we take the Government. There is a provision in the resolution that the debt shall not in any case exceed \$4,000,000. The assets of the islands are given in the statement of the financial officer showing that they are nearly twice that.

Mr. HENRY of Mississippi. Do we assume the indebtedness?

Mr. HITT. With their assets we take their liabilities. The assets are \$7,938,000, and the liabilities about \$3,900,000.

Mr. BARTLETT. Is there anything in the shape of paper money or bills which this Government becomes responsible to redeem; and if so, how much?

Mr. HITT. There are liabilities; but they are all easily ascertainable by the official reports before us. There are three series of bonds, in all \$3,330,200. There are deposits in postal savings bank of \$882,345.29, making \$4,212,545.29, less bond proceeds cash in the treasury of \$221,565.90 and postal bank deposits of \$111,371.04, in all \$332,936.94, leaving total net debt \$3,879,608.35. I think there are no other bills or paper money. It does not appear in the report.

Mr. BARTLETT. I understand that there are several hundred thousand—probably \$280,000.

Mr. HITT. It is a pretty sound Government financially; the public credit there is good.

I have consumed so much time I should ask the pardon of the House. The consideration of this measure has been long deferred. There has been so much discussion throughout the country, such manifest impatience for its consideration here, that at last there is a pretty clear perception by almost everyone that the annexation resolution before us is in response and obedience to the demands of the whole country. I think the constituency of nine-tenths of the gentlemen here, if they could utter their will by votes, would command us to promptly pass this resolution. Our votes in passing it will voice the earnest purpose of the American people; the conservative sentiment of the country is expressed by it, as a measure for the welfare, for the security and prosperity of the whole nation. Let us pass it and carry out the will of the American people. I thank the House for such patient attention. [Loud applause.]

[Wednesday June 15, the question was taken and there were yeas 209, nays 91. So the joint resolution was passed by the House.]